



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

NEWS RELEASE

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to open first of three Recovery Act-funded Veterans Curation Project laboratories

WASHINGTON (October 16, 2009) – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will open the first Veterans Curation Project laboratory, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, in Augusta, Ga., on Tuesday, October 20.

The Augusta site is the first of three Veterans Curation Project laboratories that the Corps will open with \$3.5 million in funding from the \$4.6 billion appropriated for the Army's Civil Works program in the Recovery Act. The other two sites will be located in Washington, D.C., and St. Louis, Mo., and will be operating before the end of fiscal 2010.

The three sites were selected because they are home to high populations of wounded and returning veterans.

"The three Veterans Curation Project laboratories funded by the Recovery Act are unique opportunities for the nation's Armed Forces and the Corps of Engineers," said the [Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy](#), Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

"The labs are an innovative approach to supporting returning veterans of all services with jobs and training in a variety of technical skills," said Darcy. "At the same time, the labs will advance the curation of archeological and historic properties that have come into the Corps' possession over the years as a result of construction at its water project sites around the country."

In 1995, the Corps created the Center of Expertise for Curation and Management of Archeological Collections in its [St. Louis District](#) to provide protocols and best management practices for maintaining heritage assets. The Corps has an extensive collection and has not been able to fully keep up with proper curation requirements under the National Historic Preservation Act and the Native American Graves Preservation and Repatriation Act.

The St. Louis District's Center of Expertise designed and is managing the implementation of the Veterans Curation Project. The Corps has hired Brockington and Associates of Atlanta, Ga., to establish and manage the project's three laboratories.

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Corps specialists and the contractor are also working closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs and non-governmental Wounded Warrior groups to fill many jobs at the laboratories with veterans and disabled veterans. Jobs are being tailored and rotated to fit the medical needs of those disabled veterans who are unable to work a full day and to offer on-the-job training and work to more veterans.

Veterans working at the three labs will be trained in computer, photographic and scanning technologies that will be applied to the rehabilitation of Corps archeological collections and their associated records. The technical skills learned at the labs will be transferrable to potential future jobs outside the labs.

"It is especially fitting that the opening of the first Veterans Curation Project laboratory is taking place during National Disability Employment Awareness Month," said Darcy. "As President Obama recently stated in his proclamation to recognize the month, 'Each day, Americans with disabilities play a critical role in forging and shaping the identity of our Nation.'"

"No group of people has done more to forge our national identity throughout history than the veterans who have served and sacrificed for the nation," added Darcy. "It is our privilege to now be able to give disabled veterans an opportunity to continue shaping the nation through the work and training they will do at this important new facility."

[The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works,](#) will speak at Tuesday's ceremony to open the Veterans Curation Project laboratory. The ceremony will take place at noon at 3830 Washington Road, Suite 27, Martinez, Ga., 30907.